

**LUIS GISPERT**

*You're my favorite kind of American*

September 11 – October 17, 2009

Opening reception for the artist

Friday, September 11, 2009: 5 – 7:30 p.m.

Rhona Hoffman Gallery is pleased to present *You're My Favorite Kind of American*, an exhibition of new work by Luis Gispert. In this exhibition, his first at the gallery, Gispert creates portraits or interpretations of specific sectors of American life using large-scale photographs, sculpture, and video. As his work begins with the documentation of real people in their personal environments, Gispert's genuine interest in the avocations and work of the people he portrays is exemplified in various mediums.

The three-channel synchronized film *René* depicts a family friend of Gispert's who fled from Cuba and now works in a restaurant supply store in Miami repairing machinery. Gispert followed René around for two weeks to accumulate the footage, filming his daily routines and improvising narrative elements as he went along. Throughout the film Gispert incorporates his own scenarios into the narrative, thus transforming René's role from that of a subject to that of a collaborator. Installed as a multi-channel projection, Gispert's work allows the viewer to physically enter Renee's environment. The three video channels compress 45 minutes of linear film time into 15 minutes by fracturing and overlapping events while still loosely following the arc of René's daily routine.

Themes from Gispert's previous films *Smother* and *Stereomongrel* are apparent in his large format photography. Through the perspective of the driver's seat of military Humvees, customized luxury SUVs, and low-riders are superimposed landscapes which reference the sublime landscape and the history of landscape photography. Most importantly, however, all of these custom interiors are imbued with a narrative specifically connected to the owners. These narratives reveal a range of experiences derived from recent immigrants to middle-American truck drivers to World War II aviation buffs.

Gispert's sculptures, which he describes as juxtapositions of pop icons that are often used to index cultural stereotypes, reference this idea of a narrative as well. The rock formations reference crack cocaine rocks and the heart-shaped subwoofers imbedded in them reference the outdoor speakers hidden in faux rock found in suburban pools and patios. The grape juice box and Newport cigarettes packaging color scheme are both products that are stereotypically associated with urban culture.

Gispert states, "All of these people from René to the vehicle owners are looking for a form of expression outside of their professional lives. I found their level of obsession with these forms is not too dissimilar from an artist in the studio. There is a level of earnestness in what these people do that I find very rare in contemporary art."

Luis Gispert was born in 1972 in New Jersey and raised in Miami, FL. His work has been featured in exhibitions at the Museum of Contemporary Art in North Miami, the Royal Academy of Art, London; Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt; ZKM Center for Art and Media, Karlsruhe, Germany; and MoCA, Shanghai. Solo exhibitions include Loud Image at the Hood Museum at Dartmouth College and Art Pace, San Antonio, TX and *Stereomongrel* which premiered at the Whitney Museum and traveled to the Santa Barbara Contemporary Arts Forum. Gispert currently lives and works in Brooklyn NY.

Rhona Hoffman Gallery is located at 118 North Peoria Street, Chicago, Illinois. For more information or press photography please contact [rhoffman@rhoffmangallery.com](mailto:rhoffman@rhoffmangallery.com) or phone 312.455.1990. Website: [www.rhoffmangallery.com](http://www.rhoffmangallery.com)



Luis Gispert. *L.V. Escalade*, 2009. C-print 72 x 110